

# **Architectural Techniques for Interoperability and Coexistence**

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## Enabling Coexistence and Interoperability

- Longevity
- Completeness
- Seamless Extensibility
  - “The universe is stranger than we can imagine”

## Achieving Longevity

- Bad – Inertia, Fiat
- Good – Conceptual Integrity

## Aesthetics of Function

- Beauty of Function
- Similar but not identical to civil architecture
- Cause and Effect often reversed
- Aesthetics is the result, not the cause
- Consider  $a \rightarrow b$  is not the same as  $b \rightarrow a$
- What “Looks Good” really means

## Why Architecture? Consider an Example

- Computers are universal, aren't they?
- Basic Theory of Computation – Universal Turing Machine
- from geometry: Cartesian v. polar coordinates
- from mathematics: calculus

## Why Architecture? – Time-Shared BASIC System

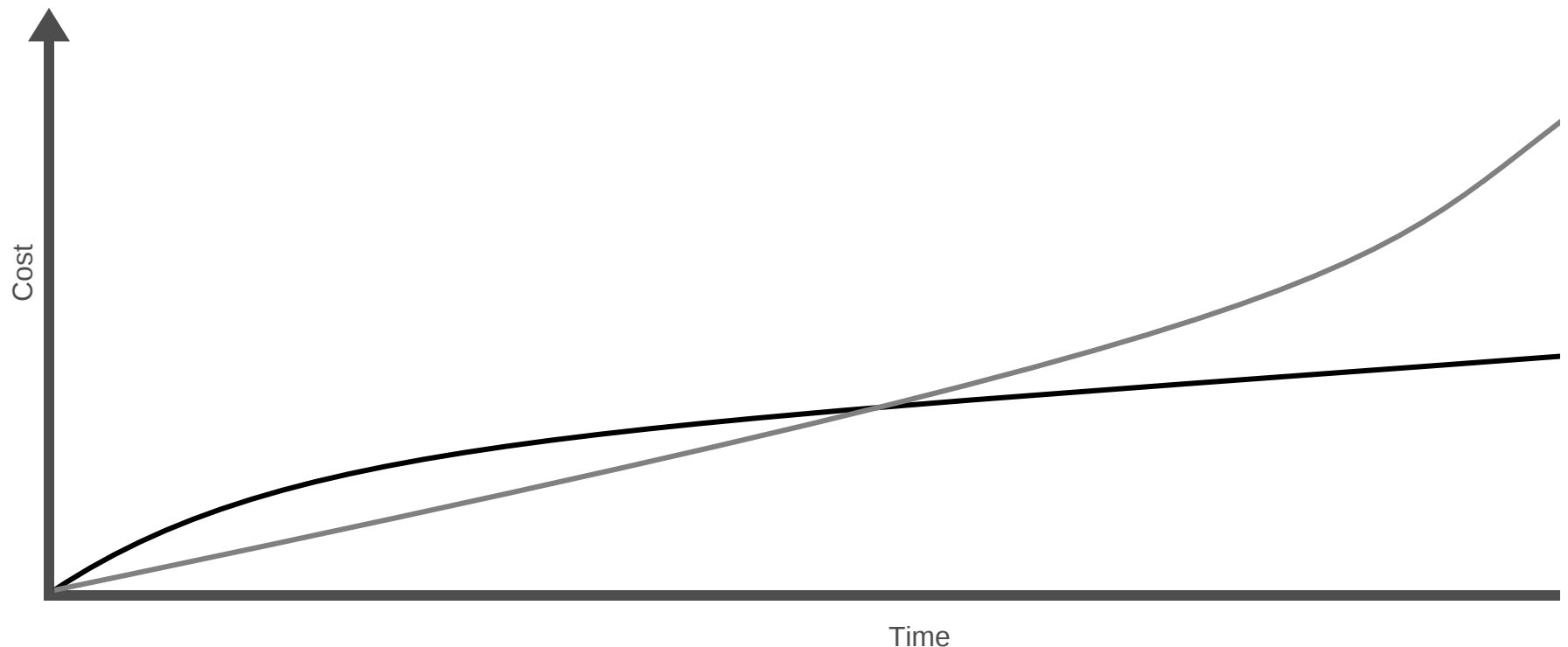
- “Time-shared BASIC” system
- multi-function: Payroll, Editing, A/R, A/P, MIS
- interwoven code gets complex quickly
- unrelated parts interact in unexpected ways

## Why Architecture? – Classic Multiprogramming

- examples: OS/360 MxT, RT-11, RSX-11, OpenVMS, UNIX
- abstractions: user; process/task; files; protection
- restricted interactions between applications
- inverse exponential simplification of interactions

## Aesthetic Costs over Time

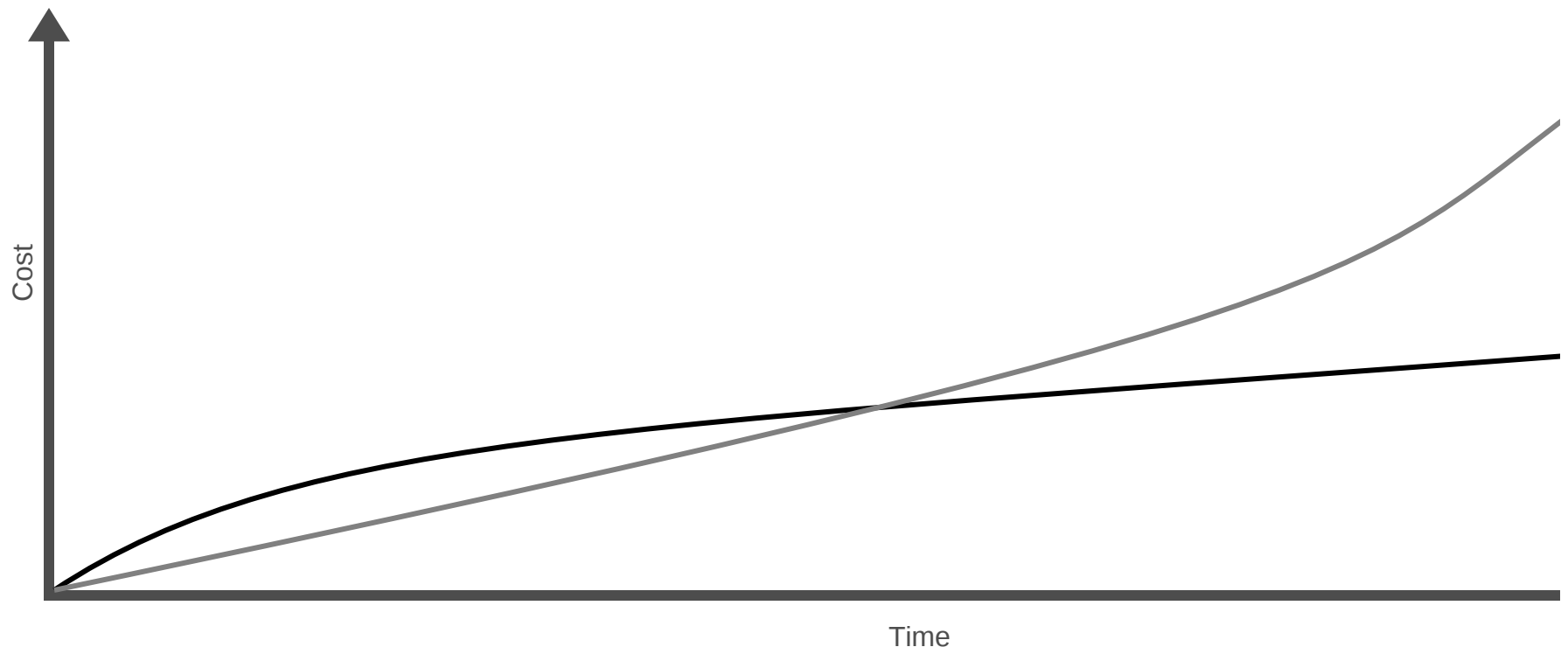
- no redundant code – reduced line count
- alternate pathway bugs eliminated





## Aesthetic Costs over Time

- reduced interaction effects
- assimilating increasing scope



## The Requirements Trap

- Immediate Necessary is not e.e.  
Long Term Sufficiency
- Change is inevitable

## Inertia – An Excuse

- low quality solution
- fear of change
- long term problem, entrenchment
- the longer inertia continues, the worse it gets

## Positive – Conceptual Integrity

- conceptual integrity
- small base of good code
- little need for modification
- contract between implementation communities

## Good Architecture is Good Architecture

- Architecture is Architecture
- Fads come and go; Style is timeless
- Critical examination of non-software architectures are well established and understood
- Software architectures are seductively malleable
- Exotica is more important than it appears

## Good Architecture is Good Architecture

- intellectual precedents
  - Buildings
  - Ships
  - Aircraft

## Software is not Different

- software and systems are deceptively malleable
- but, the malleability is not real
- code, once developed, is not malleable
- once systems are built to an interface, changes are expensive in effort, and schedule

## Real Examples of Architecture:

- Y2K – The Most Costly Software Change in History
  - YYMMDDhhmmss
  - Too Short; should be YYYY
  - Printable Representation  $\geq$  14 bytes
  - Slow – Mixed Bases





## Representation: Binary v. Printable

- Space – Mass Storage, Memory
- Binary – 8 binary bytes more than adequate
- Low break even on conversion

## Slow Speed: Mixed Bases

- Years (YYYY) – Open
- Month (MM) – 12
- Day (DD) – 28 to 31
- Hours (hh) – 24
- Minutes (mm) – 60
- Seconds (ss) – 60

## Feasibility Proof: OpenVMS TOY QuadWord

- from initial design: 64-bit binary value
- origin date: 17 November 1858 (Smithsonian)
- unit: uFortnight (100 us)
- single base
- library provided for conversion
- plus/minus dates straightforward
- Y2K problems limited to ported code and knick-knacks

## What an architecture does:

- balance needs of different constituencies
- contract between communities
- aesthetics of utility
- form follows function

## Computer v. Real World

- changeability is deceptive and illusory
- traditional architecture is better guide
- good architecture seems effortless
- good architecture minimizes interminable changes and scaffolding
- flexibility is not same as changeability

## Positive Examples:

- IBM System 360/370/...
- “undefined means undefined”
  - System/360 Principles of Operation, 196x
- RFC 821/822, & revisions – SMTP

## IBM System/360/370/...:

- “undefined means undefined”
  - System/360 Principles of Operation, 196x
- empirical checks outside architecture prohibited

## RFC 821/822, & successors – SMTP:

- address only specified (by RFC 822) to the extent of the “@” separator and the resolution of the right-hand domain name
- handling of left-hand side left to destination agent
- Good: suggested line length of 80
- Bad: limit not required, often ignored; arbitrarily long lines permitted and a problem for non-stream file systems



## Common Features of Positive Exemplars

- Demur on issues that are unneeded
- Documented ways to extend the architecture
- Specify what is needed – no more
- Avoid hubris
- Special cases are indicia of weakness

## Negative Example:

- MS Windows 3rd Party
  - Stores GUID of CD-ROM Installation device
  - Doesn't deal with multiple CD devices
  - GUID unique to Manufacturer/Model of drive
  - Other common alternative – drive letter
  - Search for volume label would be trivially different yet dramatically increases robustness

## The “Snowball” Effect

- Good begets better!
- Bad just gets worse –  
“The gift that keeps on giving. PAIN!”

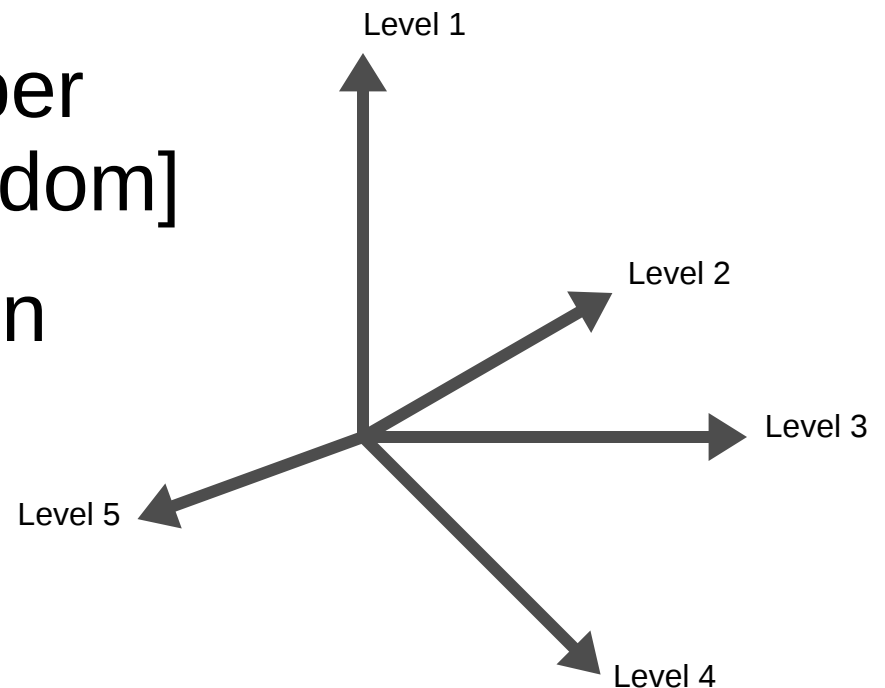
## Tools and Diagramming Drive Designs

- Classic Stack –  
ISO Open Systems Interconnect  
model
- One dimension – obvious
- Two dimension – difficult to  
visualize
- Multi-dimensional – almost  
impossible to visualize  
or discuss



## Vector “Degrees of Freedom” Diagram

- ok, my nomenclature (Gezelter, 2004)
- each level is independent
- a full implementation needs  $\geq 1$  element per vector [degree of freedom]
- freedom of substitution



## Vector “Degrees of Freedom” Diagram (cont’d)

- based on “Programming by Menu” concept (1992)

## Scope of Architect's Work

- after requirements analysis/document
- define range and scope of architecture
- decouple wherever possible
- define successive minimal subsets

## Decoupling is (EE) Agility

- agility is the ability to assimilate new roles without requiring unrelated changes
- agility is achieved by decoupling



## Design and Specify Interfaces

- per System/360 PrOp – don't experiment; read the specification
- architectural interpretation process
- review board

## What makes for a good, long-lived architecture?

- embrative
- expressive
- efficient for all players
- for simple user: straightforward
- for sophisticated users: expressive and unrestrictive

## What happens if an architecture is not embraceive?

- inevitable diverging extensions
- no back-compatibility
- Balkinization
- exponential increases in bugs, maintenance, TCO

## What happens if an architecture is not expressive?

- “off-books” work arounds
- non-uniform interface
- examine UNIX read/write/get/put/control/select
- contrast with OpenVMS \$QIO, uniform portal interface
- think “aviation English”; not “Shakespeare”

# **Reduce Pyramid of Complexity**

## Conclusions

- Good architecture is vital to leverage
- Flexibility is greatly enhanced by proper architecture
- Proper architecture is not a straight-jacket
- The most successful architectures are tremendously enabling
- Interoperability is dependent upon well-designed architectures

## Questions?

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Session Notes & Materials:

<http://www.rlgsc.com/TrentonComputerFestival/2007/index.html>